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54

**Blends of polyolefin plastics with elastomeric plasticizers.**

57

Compositions of matter useful in the preparation of film which is soft and has high tensile, tear and impact strength comprise polyolefin plastics such as polypropylene blended with an elastomeric plasticizer; the latter comprises polyethylene or a copolymer of ethylene and an unsaturated ester of a lower carboxylic acid, olefinic elastomer and a hydrocarbon oil.

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ACTORUM AG

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BLENDS OF POLYOLEFIN PLASTICS WITH ELASTOMERIC PLASTICIZERS

1           This invention relates generally to the field of  
2    plastics blends or blends of polyolefin plastics with  
3    other polymers and, optionally, process aids, fillers,  
4    etc. Specifically, it is directed to blends of polyolefin  
5    plastics such as polypropylene, polypropylene reactor  
6    copolymer, polybutylene, linear low density polyethylene,  
7    and high density polyethylene, with a polymeric concen-  
8    trate. The polymeric concentrate is preferably elasto-  
9    meric in nature and comprises a blend of polyethylene  
10   and/or a polymeric copolymer of ethylene, olefinic  
11   elastomer, oil and optionally, process aids, antiblock  
12   additives, anti-oxidants, fillers, pigments, foaming  
13   agents, etc. More specifically, the invention is direc-  
14   ted to compositions comprising blends of polypropylene  
15   and/or high density polyethylene and an elastomeric  
16   plasticizer. The elastomeric plasticizer is readily  
17   dispersed and the final compositions can be processed  
18   into films on equipment normally intended for low density  
19   polyethylene. Films produced from such compositions  
20   exhibit low secant modulus, high tear strength and high  
21   impact resistance compared to unmodified polyolefin  
22   plastics.

23           Polypropylene film is well known in the art, but  
24   it is typically produced by the cast or tubular water bath  
25   processes rather than employing the less complex equip-  
26   ment used for low density polyethylene. Polypropylene  
27   film produced using low density polyethylene equipment  
28   generally has low impact strength, is very stiff (high  
29   secant modulus) and has poor tear strength. Blending  
30   polypropylene with various elastomers can improve the  
31   impact strength of the polypropylene, but the overall  
32   balance of properties is jeopardized, e.g., tensile

1 strength, tear strength, impact resistance and stiffness.  
2 More typically, ternary compositions are employed com-  
3 prising polypropylene, elastomer and high density poly-  
4 ethylene (HDPE) wherein the desired components are di-  
5 rectly blended, see, e.g., "Exxon Elastomers for Poly-  
6 olefin Modification" (Exxon Chemical Company publication,  
7 pages 15-35). This reference suggests that the elastomer  
8 and HDPE are incorporated at levels of 5 to 15 weight per-  
9 cent. In addition to improved impact strength it is also  
10 stated that tensile strength and melt flow rate are de-  
11 pressed and, furthermore, there is no teaching that compo-  
12 sitions prepared by merely directly blending the indivi-  
13 dual components results in a composition which can be pro-  
14 cessed on low density polyethylene film equipment.

15 Limited teachings are available which disclose the  
16 necessary incorporation of oil in a blend composition such  
17 as disclosed herein. However the proportions and proper-  
18 ties disclosed in the references are quite different from  
19 what is contemplated herein. Furthermore, no reference  
20 teaches the unique method of preparing an elastomeric plas-  
21 ticizer which is then dispersed in the polyolefin phase,  
22 resulting in particularly desirable and useful properties  
23 in the final composition. United States Patent 3,957,919  
24 describes a thermoplastic elastomer composition which,  
25 optionally, can contain extender oil. The composition is  
26 hot blended in the presence of a free radical generating  
27 catalyst so as to subject the composition to a free radi-  
28 cal reaction. The advance represented by this reference  
29 is not directed to the subject of the present invention  
30 but merely provides a means, specifically the presence of  
31 polyethylene (or polyethylene containing 10% or less of  
32 copolymerized alpha-olefins having 3 to 16 carbon atoms),  
33 in a blend of polypropylene and EPM (ethylene-propylene  
34 copolymer) or EPDM (ethylene-propylene terpolymer) which  
35 permits the use of a peroxide without significant poly-  
36 propylene degradation. Furthermore, the reference spe-

1 cifically describes the preparation of the blend composi-  
2 tion as a one step process; such a process is to be con-  
3 trasted with the method disclosed and claimed herein  
4 which utilizes an elastomeric plasticizer concentrate  
5 which is blended with the polyolefin plastic. The types  
6 of products for which the blend composition is to be used  
7 is substantially different in the reference compared with  
8 the uses disclosed herein.

9 A later patent to the same inventors, U.S. 4,059,654,  
10 discloses the same basic composition and method as above,  
11 but the composition contains a slightly higher level of  
12 the polyethylene component so as to be better suited for  
13 use in the manufacture of flexible hose.

14 Elastomeric thermoplastic compositions containing oil  
15 and, optionally, a carbon black filler, for use in molded,  
16 paintable structures is disclosed in U.S. 4,132,698. This  
17 reference requires the polymeric components to have spe-  
18 cific morphological characteristics in order to achieve  
19 two discrete, nonhomogeneous, continuous phases. The com-  
20 positions of the reference differ from those disclosed  
21 herein with regard to the content of elastomer component has  
22 well as the contemplated uses; the instant compositions  
23 being film-forming whereas the reference is directed to  
24 molded or extruded articles. Furthermore, the concept dis-  
25 closed herein of employing an elastomeric plasticizer to  
26 achieve unique blend performance properties and process-  
27 ability is absent from this and the other references dis-  
28 closed herein.

29 U.S. Patent No. 4,303,571 teaches the preparation of  
30 a film forming blend composition comprising ethylene-pro-  
31 pylene elastomers, ethylene-vinyl acetate copolymers and  
32 a hydrocarbon oil plasticizer. However, the reference does  
33 not recognize that such a composition can be advantageously  
34 blended with polyolefin plastics nor, as taught herein,  
35 that the method of blending can be particularly benefi-  
36 cial.

1        Compositional differences also distinguish the in-  
2        stant invention from other references disclosing thermo-  
3        plastic elastomer compositions, for example Japanese Kokai  
4        to Sumitomo Chemical, 77 126,450 and Japanese Kokai to  
5        Mitsui Petrochemical, 80 71,739. The former reference  
6        discloses a modified copolymer rubber composition for use  
7        in extruded and molded articles. Additionally, the com-  
8        positions of the latter reference are intended to be  
9        treated with a peroxide crosslinking agent.

10       In accordance with the present invention, improved  
11       compositions of matter have been discovered for use in  
12       the preparation of a film which is soft and has high ten-  
13       sile, tear and impact strength. The composition is also  
14       useful in the production of fibers, tapes, woven fabrics,  
15       ropes, etc. The blends are comprised of (a) polyolefin  
16       plastics such as polypropylene, polypropylene reactor co-  
17       polymer, polybutylene, linear low density polyethylene,  
18       high density polyethylene or mixtures thereof (b) poly-  
19       ethylene or a copolymer of ethylene and an unsaturated  
20       ester of a lower carboxylic acid, (c) olefinic elastomer,  
21       and (d) hydrocarbon oil.

22       A particularly advantageous method for preparing the  
23       film-forming, thermoplastic elastomeric composition com-  
24       prises admixing preformed elastomeric plasticizer with the  
25       polyolefin plastics. The elastomeric plasticizer com-  
26       prises a blend of components (b), (c) and (d) above.

27       The use of an elastomeric plasticizer is particularly  
28       advantageous in that it possesses stable pellet form,  
29       blends with polyolefin plastics over broad compositional  
30       ranges, and disperses readily under moderate melt mixing  
31       conditions.

32       Polyolefin plastics blends useful in this invention  
33       can employ polypropylene which can be a highly crystalline  
34       isotactic or syndiotactic polypropylene. Also, the poly-

1 propylene may be a copolymer, referred to as a polypropy-  
2 lene reactor copolymer, either random or block copolymer,  
3 containing minor amounts of an alpha-olefin comonomer of  
4 2 to 16 carbon atoms. The level of comonomer which can be  
5 utilized is about 1 to about 20 weight percent, prefer-  
6 ably about 2 to about 18, most preferably about 2 to about  
7 15; a preferred comonomer is ethylene. The density of  
8 polypropylene can be from about 0.800 to about 0.900 g/cc.  
9 High density polyethylene (HDPE) useful as the polyolefin  
10 plastic to be blended with the elastomeric plasticizer  
11 has a density of about 0.941 to about 0.965 g/cc. High  
12 density polyethylene is an established product of com-  
13 merce and its manufacture and general properties are well  
14 known in the art. Typically, HDPE has a relatively broad  
15 molecular weight distribution, characterized by the ratio  
16 of weight average to number average molecular weight, of  
17 from about 20 to about 40. HDPE for use in film can have  
18 a melt index (ASTM D1238, Method E) of from about 0.03 to  
19 about 5.0 g/10 min. and a density of from about 0.941 to  
20 about 0.965 g/cc.

21 Polybutylene, which is also useful in this invention,  
22 as the polyolefin plastic, is a term which generally re-  
23 fers to both poly (1-butene) homopolymer and the copolymer  
24 with, e.g., ethylene, propylene, pentene-1, etc. Particu-  
25 larly useful in this invention is the ethylene copolymer.  
26 Polybutylene is manufactured via stereospecific Ziegler-  
27 Natta polymerization of the monomer(s). Commercially use-  
28 ful products are of high molecular weight and isotacti-  
29 city. A variety of commercial grades of both homopolymer  
30 and ethylene copolymer are available with melt indices  
31 that range from about 0.3 to about 20 g/10 min.; commer-  
32 cial ethylene copolymer grades have a melt index of from  
33 about 1 to about 2, although it is to be expected that a  
34 wider range would be acceptable, e.g., from about 0.5 to  
35 about 5 or higher, depending on the intended application.



1       Linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE) is a rela-  
2       tively new class of low density polyethylene character-  
3       ized by little, if any, long chain branching, in contrast  
4       to conventional low density polyethylene. The processes  
5       for producing LLDPE are well known in the art and commer-  
6       cial grades of this polyolefin plastic are available.  
7       Generally, it is produced in gas-phase fluidized bed re-  
8       actors or liquid-phase solution process reactors; the  
9       former process can be carried out at pressures of about  
10      100 to 300 psi and temperatures as low as 100<sup>o</sup> C. Poly-  
11      mers can be made in the gas phase with melt indices and  
12      densities over the full commercial range and with molecu-  
13      lar weight distributions from very narrow to very broad.  
14      Typically, the level of polyolefin plastics employed is  
15      from about 95 to about 15 weight percent of the composi-  
16      tion, preferably about 92 to about 17 weight percent,  
17      most preferably about 90 to about 20 weight percent.

18       The elastomeric plasticizer comprises, in part, a  
19      polyethylene component which can be low density polyethy-  
20      lene (for example, about .910 to about .925 g/cc), medium  
21      density polyethylene (for example, about .925 to about  
22      .940 g/cc) or high density polyethylene (for example,  
23      about .941 to about .965 g/cc). The polyethylene can be  
24      prepared by a high pressure process or a low pressure pro-  
25      cess and includes linear polyethylene and copolymers of  
26      ethylene. The term polyethylene as used herein also  
27      includes polyethylene copolymers such as copolymers of  
28      ethylene and alpha-olefins having 3 to 16 carbon atoms,  
29      for example, propylene, 1-butene, etc, as well as co-  
30      polymers of ethylene with an unsaturated ester of a lower  
31      carboxylic acid. In particular, copolymers of ethylene  
32      with vinyl acetate or alkyl acrylates, for example, methyl  
33      acrylate and ethyl acrylate, are employed. For the pur-  
34      poses of this invention, polyethylene copolymers are also  
35      considered to include blends of polyethylene and polyethy-  
36      lene copolymers. The polyethylene copolymers to be em-  
37      ployed generally contain from about 50 to about 99 weight

1 percent ethylene, preferably about 60 to about 95 weight  
2 percent ethylene, most preferably about 70 to about 90  
3 weight percent ethylene. The level of polyethylene or  
4 polyethylene copolymer employed in the final blend compo-  
5 sition is generally from about 2 to about 60 weight per-  
6 cent of the composition, preferably from about 3 to about  
7 50 weight percent, most preferably about 4 to about 40  
8 weight percent, for example from about 5 to about 35  
9 weight percent.

10 The olefinic elastomer component of the elastomeric  
11 plasticizer can comprise ethylene copolymer elastomers,  
12 such as copolymers of ethylene with higher alpha-olefins  
13 such as propylene. The ethylene elastomer copolymers for  
14 use herein should include between about 30 and about 90  
15 weight percent ethylene, preferably between about 35 and  
16 about 80 weight percent ethylene, most preferably between  
17 about 50 and about 70 weight percent ethylene. In some  
18 cases an oil extended elastomer can be employed in the  
19 compositions of this invention. In such case, the com-  
20 position is adjusted to take account of the oil added by  
21 means of the oil extended elastomer as compared to the  
22 total amount of oil desired in the final composition.

23 It is also within the scope of this invention to  
24 employ as the olefinic elastomer an ethylene copolymer  
25 elastomer comprising a terpolymer of ethylene, a higher  
26 alpha-olefin such as propylene, and a nonconjugated diene  
27 (the terpolymer commonly referred to as EPDM). In such  
28 elastomers the nonconjugated diolefin may be straight  
29 chain, branched chain or cyclic hydrocarbon diolefins  
30 having from 6 to 15 carbon atoms, such as the following:

31 A. straight chain acyclic dienes such as: 1,  
32 4-hexadiene; 1, 6-octadiene;

33 B. branched chain acyclic dienes such as:  
34 5-methyl-1, 4-hexadiene; 3,7-dimethyl-1,6-octa-  
35 diene; 3,7-dimethyl-1,7 octadiene and the mixed  
36 isomers of dihydro-myrcene and dehydro-ocinene;

1 C. single ring alicyclic dienes such as: 1,3-  
2 cyclopentadiene; 1,4-cyclohexadiene; 1,5-cyclo-  
3 octadiene; and 1,5-cyclododecadiene;  
4 D. multi-ring alicyclic fused and bridged ring  
5 dienes such as: tetrahydroindene; methyltetra-  
6 hydroindene; dicyclopentadiene; bicyclo-(2,2,1)-  
7 hepta-2,5-diene; alkenyl, alkylidene, cyclo-  
8 alkenyl and cycloalkylidene norbornenes such as  
9 5-methylene-2-norbornene (MNB), 5-ethylidene-2-  
10 norbornene (ENB), 5-propenyl-2-norbornene, 5-  
11 isopropylidene-2-norbornene, 5-(4-cyclopentenyl)-  
12 2-norbornene; 5-cyclohexylidene-2-norbornene;  
13 5-vinyl-norbornene; and norbornadiene.

14 Of the non-conjugated dienes typically used to prepare  
15 these copolymers, preferred are dicyclopentadiene, 1,4-  
16 hexadiene, 5-methylene-2-norbornene and 5-ethylidene-2-  
17 norbornene; 5-ethylidene-2-norbornene (ENB) and 1,4-hexa-  
18 diene are particularly preferred diolefins. EPDM elasto-  
19 mers and their method of manufacture are now well known to  
20 those skilled in the art. Oil extended EPDM elastomers are  
21 also within the scope of disclosed EPDM elastomers. Pre-  
22 ferred EPDM elastomers contain about 30 to about 90 weight  
23 percent ethylene, more preferably about 35 to about 80  
24 weight percent ethylene, most preferably about 50 to about  
25 70 weight percent ethylene, and from about 0.5 to about 15  
26 weight percent nonconjugated diolefin, e.g., ENB.

27 The olefinic elastomer useful in this invention can  
28 also be polyisobutylene, copolymers of isobutylene and iso-  
29 prene (generally known as butyl rubber) and halogenated co-  
30 polymers of isobutylene and isoprene (generally known as  
31 halogenated butyl rubber, such as chlorinated, brominated  
32 and chlorobrominated butyl rubber). Butyl rubber is a vul-  
33 canizable rubbery copolymer containing from about 85 to  
34 99.5 percent combined isoolefin having from 4 to 8 carbon  
35 atoms and 0.5 to 15 percent combined conjugated diolefin  
36 having from 4 to 8 carbon atoms. Such copolymers and their  
37 preparation are well known, and generally the isoolefin is

1 a compound such as isobutylene and the diolefin is a com-  
2 pound such as butadiene or isoprene. Halogenated butyl  
3 rubber is also well known; chlorinated and brominated  
4 butyl rubber generally contain at least about 0.5 weight  
5 percent combined halogen and up to about 1 atom of halo-  
6 gen per double bond in the copolymer; chlorobrominated  
7 butyl rubber generally contains from about 1.0 to about  
8 3.0 weight percent bromine and from about 0.05 to about  
9 0.5 weight percent chlorine.

10 The level of olefinic elastomer employed in the final  
11 blend composition is generally from about 1 to about 50  
12 weight percent of the composition, preferably from about  
13 2 to about 40 weight percent, most preferably about 3 to  
14 about 30 weight percent.

15 A hydrocarbon oil is also incorporated into the ther-  
16 moplastic elastomeric blend composition as a component of  
17 the elastomeric plasticizer. The hydrocarbon oils which  
18 can be used include aromatic, naphthenic and paraffinic  
19 types. Aromatic oils are less preferred in some applica-  
20 tions because of potential color limitations and regula-  
21 tions of the United States Food and Drug Administration,  
22 especially where the film or finished product comes into  
23 contact with food. For certain applications an especially  
24 "clean" oil may be preferred, such as a white mineral oil,  
25 a petroleum hydrocarbon oil (e.g., Primol, marketed by  
26 Exxon Company, USA). The level of hydrocarbon oil em-  
27 ployed in the final blend composition is generally from  
28 about 1 to about 30 weight percent of the composition,  
29 preferably from about 2 to about 20 weight percent, most  
30 preferably from about 3 to about 15 weight percent.

31 Considering the elastomeric plasticizer independently  
32 of the total (or final) thermoplastic elastomeric blend  
33 the preferred amount of polyethylene or copolymer of  
34 ethylene would be about 20 to about 70 weight percent of  
35 the elastomeric plasticizer, the olefinic elastomer from  
36 about 20 to about 80 weight percent and the hydrocarbon  
37 oil from about 1 to about 35 weight percent.

1 A further embodiment of this invention is the incor-  
2 poration into the elastomeric plasticizer composition of  
3 a small percentage of polyolefin plastics, such as poly-  
4 propylene, polypropylene reactor copolymer, polybutylene,  
5 linear low density polyethylene, high density polyethylene  
6 or mixtures thereof, in order to improve the storage sta-  
7 bility and ease of handling of the elastomeric plasticizer.  
8 Useful levels of such polyolefin plastic would be up to  
9 about 30 weight percent, preferably up to about 20 weight  
10 percent, most preferably up to about 15 weight percent,  
11 for example, up to about 10 weight percent based on the  
12 weight of the elastomeric plasticizer. The proportions of  
13 elastomeric plasticizer and polyolefin plastics are ad-  
14 justed for the final composition in order to take into  
15 account the polyolefin plastic present in the elastomeric  
16 plasticizer.

17 In addition to the essential ingredients of the over-  
18 all thermoplastic elastomeric composition (polyolefin  
19 plastic and elastomeric plasticizer as previously defined)  
20 as well as the optional use of a small percentage of poly-  
21 olefin plastic in the elastomeric plasticizer (as previous-  
22 ly disclosed), various optional ingredients can be incor-  
23 porated into the composition in order to achieve various  
24 cost and/or performance objectives in specific end-use  
25 applications. For example, one can use such materials as  
26 process aids (e.g., stearic acid), lubricants (e.g., ole-  
27 amide), antiblocking aids, antioxidants, foaming agents  
28 and fillers and pigments. The latter two classes of ma-  
29 terials can be used at levels up to about 40 weight per-  
30 cent based on the weight of the total composition.

31 Preparation of compositions of this invention, i.e.,  
32 the blend of polyolefin plastics and elastomeric plasti-  
33 cizer as described above, can be achieved in several dif-  
34 ferent ways. The polyolefin plastics and elastomeric plas-  
35 ticizer are brought into intimate contact by, for example,  
36 dry blending these materials and then passing the overall  
37 composition through a compounding extruder. Alternatively,

1 the polyolefin plastics and elastomeric plasticizer can  
2 be fed directly to a mixing device such as a compound-  
3 ing extruder, high shear continuous mixer, two roll mill,  
4 an internal mixer such as a Banbury, etc. The optional  
5 ingredients previously described can be added to the com-  
6 position during this mixing operation. It is also pos-  
7 sible to achieve melt mixing in an extruder section of a  
8 film line or in an injection molding machine. Overall,  
9 the objective is to obtain a uniform dispersion of all  
10 ingredients and this is readily achieved by inducing suf-  
11 ficient shear and heat to cause the plastics component(s)  
12 to melt. However, time and temperature of mixing should  
13 be controlled as is normally done by one skilled in the  
14 art so as to avoid molecular weight degradation and un-  
15 necessary volatilization of oil. Depending on the poly-  
16 olefin plastics component(s) employed, a melt temperature  
17 range of about 250°F to about 550°F could be expected.  
18 Where extruder mixing is employed the length to diameter  
19 (L/D) ratio of the screw should be at least 10/1, prefer-  
20 ably at least 15/1.

21 Generally, the elastomeric plasticizer is prepared  
22 in a separate operation from the preparation of the final  
23 composition. However, it should be recognized that it is  
24 possible to separate these steps only minimally so that a  
25 sequential two stage batch process produces the final  
26 composition or alternatively, a continuous process can be  
27 achieved by using, for example, a mixing extruder with  
28 multiple feed sections.

29 Where it is preferred to prepare the elastomeric  
30 plasticizer as a separate operation, process conditions  
31 known to those skilled in the art are followed in order  
32 to obtain uniform dispersion of the ingredients. The  
33 elastomeric plasticizer can advantageously be prepared  
34 in pellet form so that it can be fed into the final mix-  
35 ing stage, with the olefinic plastics, using plastics  
36 pellet metering equipment.

1 Preparation of the elastomeric plasticizer is readi-  
2 ly achieved by using mixing equipment well known in the  
3 art so as to obtain high shear. For example, such mix-  
4 ing can be obtained in an internal mixer such as a  
5 Banbury, on a two roll mill, in a continuous mixing ex-  
6 truder, high shear continuous mixer, etc. Those skilled  
7 in the art are familiar with the principles of controlling  
8 time, temperature and sequence of ingredients so as to  
9 maximize uniformity of dispersion of the ingredients in  
10 the composition. Pelletization of the elastomeric plas-  
11 ticizer can be carried out after mixing and is preferred  
12 so that such pellets can readily be handled and subse-  
13 quently conveniently blended with pellets of the poly-  
14 olefin plastics in order to prepare the final composition.

15 It is recommended that the melt temperature of the  
16 elastomeric plasticizer be kept under 450°F during its  
17 preparation to minimize liberation of acetic acid (where  
18 ethylene vinyl acetate is used in the formulation). It  
19 is generally most convenient to mix the elastomeric plas-  
20 ticizer in a two-step Banbury mixing operation, especially  
21 if it is desirable to minimize the amount of undispersed  
22 particles of olefinic elastomers in the final film. The  
23 first pass is typically used to blend the olefinic elas-  
24 tomer and polyethylene or copolymer of ethylene as pre-  
25 viously defined, and the second is used to extend the mix-  
26 ture with the oil and other ingredients (e.g., processing  
27 aids, fillers, etc.). Dump temperatures are typically  
28 320°F - 380°F for the final oil-containing mixture.

29 Following preparation of the final composition (poly-  
30 olefin plastics plus elastomeric plasticizer and optional  
31 ingredients), the blend can be used to manufacture the  
32 unique film which results. Where polypropylene is the  
33 polyolefin, soft polypropylene films can be produced  
34 which are processable on low density polyethylene blown  
35 and cast equipment without any modifications. It can  
36 also be used on other types of equipment commonly used  
37 to produce plastic films, e.g., tubular water bath

1 extrusion process, blown or cast co-extrusion process, ex-  
2 trusion coating onto another substrate, etc.

3 Since the elastomeric plasticizer disperses readily  
4 in the polyolefin plastics in all proportions cited here-  
5 in, even under moderate melt mixing conditions, mixing  
6 can be achieved just prior to end use, for example, in  
7 the extruder section of a film line or an injection mold-  
8 ing machine.

9 Film produced according to the compositions and  
10 methods taught herein has excellent drawability, with  
11 high quality film being obtained at gauges as low as 0.5  
12 mil; it is expected that high quality film can be obtain-  
13 ed in gauges even as low as 0.3 mil. The films have a  
14 low secant modulus, high tear strength, impact and punc-  
15 ture resistance, while having good temperature resistance  
16 and high tensile strength contributed by the polyolefin  
17 plastics.

18 In addition to film, the compositions disclosed  
19 herein can be used to prepare fibers, tapes, woven fabrics,  
20 ropes, and products made by injection molding, blow mold-  
21 ing, sheet forming, thermoforming, extruding etc., having  
22 especially in comparison to polypropylene increased flex-  
23 ibility, decreased splittiness and fibrillation, improved  
24 heat sealing, and improved absorption of inks and dyes.

25 The scope and significance of the present invention  
26 may be more fully understood with reference to the follow-  
27 ing specific examples thereof.

28 EXAMPLE 1

29 Polypropylene and low density polyethylene films were  
30 prepared and properties compared to blend compositions of  
31 the present invention, i.e., polypropylene containing elastomeric  
32 modifier. In one experiment (Table I(d)) the elastomeric  
33 plasticizer was a blend of 49% ethylene methyl acrylate  
34 (PE-2205, 2.4 MI@190°C, 0.942 g/cc density) 28% ethylene  
35 propylene rubber (Vistalon 3708, 65% ethylene, 3.7% ENB)  
36 20% oil, 2% slip agent (Oleamide) and 1% stearic acid.



1 To prepare the plasticizer, resin and elastomer were  
2 fluxed in a 1D size Banbury for 1 minute. After 2 minutes  
3 of mixing the oil was added and the mixture attained flux  
4 conditions again after 4½ minutes. At 5 minutes, the  
5 other materials were added and the batch was dropped at  
6 295°F in 6½ minutes. The blend was then strand cut,  
7 pelletized and Banbury mixed 4½ minutes with the poly-  
8 propylene (grade SA-861) reaching a dump temperature of  
9 380°F. In experiment (e) of Table I a similar elasto-  
10 meric plasticizer composition was prepared as an experi-  
11 ment (d), it was blended 50/50 with polypropylene as  
12 described above and used to produce a cast film. Film  
13 properties of the compositions of this invention are  
14 summarized in Table I and compared to unmodified poly-  
15 olefin plastics films.

16 EXAMPLE 2

17 This example shows the effect of elastomeric plas-  
18 ticizer concentration in a polypropylene blend on  
19 several properties of extruded melt drawn tapes (Table  
20 II). The elastomeric plasticizer contained 51% UE-631,  
21 28% VISTALON 3708, 20% Primol 355, and 1% stearic acid.  
22 Its method of preparation was similar to that cited in  
23 Example 1. The polypropylene grade used was Escorene PP  
24 1012, an injection molding resin having a density of  
25 0.900 g/cc and a melt flow rate of 5.3 at 230°C (condi-  
26 tion L).

27 EXAMPLE 3

28 The effect on blown film properties of varying the  
29 composition of the elastomeric plasticizer is shown  
30 in this example. The polypropylene grade remained con-  
31 stant as did the blend ratio of polypropylene and  
32 elastomeric plasticizer (60/40). Film properties are  
33 shown in Table III; MD refers to machine direction, TD to  
34 transverse direction. The elastomeric plasticizer and  
35 the blend with polypropylene were prepared as previously  
36 described in Example 1.

1 EXAMPLE 4

2 In this example high molecular weight, high density  
3 polyethylene (HDPE, grade Hostalen<sup>®</sup> 9255F) was used as  
4 the polyolefin plastic. Pellets of HDPE were dry blended  
5 with an elastomeric plasticizer (in the ratio 75 HDPE:  
6 25 elastomeric plasticizer) comprising:

7	Ethylene vinyl acetate (14 wt.% vinyl acetate,	
8	grade UE 622) -	-48%
9	EPDM rubber (65 wt.% ethylene, grade, Vistalon	
10	3708)	-28%
11	Oil (grade, Arco <sup>®</sup> Prime 400)	-23%
12	Stearic Acid	- 1%

13 The dry blended composition was passed through a 2½  
14 inch dia. Royle compounding extruder and blown into a film  
15 using a 2½ in. dia. Alpine extruder. Surprisingly, it was  
16 possible to produce a 1 mil gauge film with the composi-  
17 tion of this invention. Compared to prior art film compris-  
18 ing a blend of HDPE and polyisobutylene the film of this  
19 invention produced in this example showed better clarity,  
20 less tendency to stress whiten when creased and higher  
21 machine direction tear strength in a 4 mil film. Proper-  
22 ties are summarized in Table IV.

23 EXAMPLE 5

24 The experiment of Example 4 was repeated except that  
25 1 mil films were prepared and properties of the blend of  
26 high molecular weight HDPE with the elastomeric plasti-  
27 cizer were compared with controls of unplasticized HDPE;  
28 one was the high molecular weight plastic used in the blend  
29 and a second, a medium molecular weight HDPE. Data are  
30 summarized in Table V.

31 EXAMPLE 6

32 The addition of elastomeric plasticizer to polybuty-  
33 lene (grade 8640, an ethylene-1-butene copolymer, MI=1.0  
34 at 190°C) was evaluated using a conventional low density  
35 polyethylene blown film line. The formulation of the  
36 elastomeric plasticizer corresponds to that used in Example  
37 3 and its method of preparation was as described in

1 Example 1. The plasticizer concentrate was dry blended  
2 with pellets of polybutylene in ratios of 75:25 and 50:50  
3 polybutylene:plasticizer and fed directly to the hopper  
4 of a 1-1/2 inch, 24:1 L:D extruder. The elastomeric plas-  
5 ticizer dispersed well in the polybutylene and the bubble  
6 demonstrated greater stability over straight polybutylene.  
7 Properties of the resulting films are given in Table VI.  
8 The films exhibited high toughness, greater clarity, and a  
9 softer feel relative to neat polybutylene.

10 EXAMPLE 7

11 This example describes the use of polyisobutylene  
12 (grade VISTANEX<sup>®</sup> L-80) as a component of the elastomeric  
13 plasticizer. The elastomeric plasticizer was prepared  
14 in a Banbury mixer according to mixing procedures describe  
15 earlier. It was then underwater-pelletized using a 2½  
16 inch, 24:1 L:D extruder.

17 The plasticizer pellets were then dry blended with  
18 polypropylene (grade-Escorene PP 5052) in the ratio 60PP:  
19 40 elastomeric plasticizer and underwater-pelletized, again  
20 using a 2½ inch extruder. Film was blown on a commercial  
21 1½ inch LDPE blown film line using a die gap of 23 mils.  
22 The film processed easily and resulted in the properties  
23 indicated in Table VII.

24 EXAMPLE 8

25 An elastomeric plasticizer of the following formu-  
26 lation: 37% UE-622 EVA, 12% UE-645 (28% vinyl acetate,  
27 1.0 MI), 28% VISTALON 3708, 23% Primol 355, and 0.2%.  
28 Irganox 1076, was extruder mixed at a 75:25 ratio with  
29 linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE, grade LPX-1, 1.0  
30 MI, 0.918 g/cc) and processed into film on a conventional  
31 low density polyethylene line using a die gap of 23 mils.  
32 The plasticizer had been Banbury mixed and pelletized as  
33 previously described. Unlike neat LLDPE, which normally  
34 requires wider die gap settings and a specialized screw  
35 design, the plasticized LLDPE processed well on the un-  
36 modified equipment.

TABLE I  
PROPERTIES OF 1 MIL FILMS

EXPERIMENT	a (1) PP	b (2) PP	c LDPE (3)	d 60 X PP (4)	e 50X PP (5)
Polyolefin Plastic					
Elastomeric Plasticizer	--	--	--	40X	50X
Film Type	Blown	Cast	Blown	Blown	Cast
Blow Up Ratio	3.1	--	2.55	2.55	--
Gauge, mils	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Yield Strength, psi Machine (H)	5230	3400	1430	1596	--
ASTM - D882	--	3400	1565	1519	--
Yield Strength, psi Machine (T)	15	10	10	25	--
ASTM - D882, X T	--	10	10	20	--
Tensile Strength, psi H	6170	7000	2397	5179	6379
ASTM - 882 T	3320	7000	3849	4722	3932
Ultimate Elongation, X H	505	700	420	640	640
T	10	700	155	655	690
1X Secant Modulus, psi H	168,100	110,000	32,567	36,500	28,570
ASTM - D882 T	185,000	110,000	--	--	24,300
Kleinendorf Tear, g/mil H	6	30	126	--	112
ASTM - D1922 T	9	100	56	--	320
Dart Drop Impact, grams	10	100	--	--	360
ASTM - D1709 (F50)					
(1) Polypropylene-grade Profax PD 064					(a), (c), (d) Made on 1-1/2" Sterling Blown Film Line
(2) Polypropylene-grade Profax PD 742					(b) Made on 6" Black Clawson Cast Film Line
(3) Low Density Polyethylene-grade LD-130					(e) Made on 4-1/2" Black Clawson Cast Film Line
(4) 60X Polypropylene-grade SA-861					
(5) 40X Elastomeric Plasticizer (19.6X EMA 2205, 11.2X VISTALON 3708, 8X PRIMOL 355, 0.8X Oleamide, 0.4X stearic acid)					
(5) 50X Polypropylene-grade SA861, 50X Elastomeric Plasticizer (24.5X EVA-UE-631, 14X VISTALON 3708, 10X PRIMOL 355, 0.5X stearic acid, 1X Oleamide)					

1	TABLE II			
2	<u>PROPERTIES OF EXTRUDED MELT-DRAWN TAPES</u>			
3	<u>COMPOSITION</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>c</u>
4	POLYPROPYLENE	85	70	50
5	ELASTOMERIC PLASTICIZER	15	30	50
6	<u>MELT INDEX</u> AT 190°C	2.5	3.5	3.0
7	<u>MELT FLOW RATE</u> AT 230°C	5.1	7.0	7.5
8	PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF			
9	<u>EXTRUDED MELT-DRAWN TAPES</u>			
10	TENSILE AT YIELD, PSI	3190	2260	1580
11	ELONGATION AT YIELD, %	15	18	25
12	ULTIMATE TENSILE, PSI	5600	5300	5100
13	ULTIMATE ELONGATION, %	725	810	875
14	STIFFNESS	<div> <div>DECREASING</div> <div>→</div> </div>		
15	SHORE D HARDNESS	60	55	42

TABLE III  
(1)  
PROPERTIES OF BLOOM FILM

	EXPERIMENT	a	b	c	d	e
	BASE FORMULA (2)	OIL EXTENDED EPDM (3)	EP COPOLYMER (4)	ETHYLENE METHYL ACRYLATE COPOLYMER (5)	LOW DENSITY POLYETHYLENE (6)	ETHYLENE VINYL ACETATE COPOLYMER (7)
1						
2						
3						
4	VARIATION IN					
5	BASE FORMULA (2)					
6	AVG. GAUGE, mils	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.2
7	BLOW UP RATIO	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55
8	MODULUS AT YIELD,					
9	PSI MD	1462	1718	1596	2284	1603
10	TD	1466	1731	1519	1974	1450
11	ELONGATION AT					
12	YIELD, % MD	25	25	25	35	30
13	TD	20	20	20	25	20
14	10% MODULUS,					
15	PSI TD	1262	1590	1339	1784	1299
16	25% MODULUS,					
17	PSI MD	1462	1718	1596	2264	1591
18	TENSILE					
19	STRENGTH, MD	3774	4381	5179	5132	4364
20	PSI TD	4076	4783	4722	4379	3732
21	SECANT MODULUS,					
22	PSI	30,433	39,200	36,500	47,500	40,367
23	ELONG., %					
24	MD	625	640	640	590	595
25	TD	675	675	655	640	655
26						
27	(1) 60% POLYPROPYLENE, 40% ELASTOMERIC PLASTICIZER					
28	(2) Base Formula: 49% EVA-UR-631, 28% VISTALON 3700, 20% PRIMOL 355, 2% oleamide, 1% stearic acid					
29	(3) EP-ENB TERPOLYMER, 75 phr oil, 66 wt % ethylene (grade-Vistalon 3777)					
30	(4) Ethylene-77 wt % (grade-Vistalon 719)					
31	(5) PE-2205, 2.4 dg/min HI at 190°C, 0.942 g/cc density					
32	(6) Escorene LD-106, 2.8 HI at 190°C, 0.919 g/cc density, 106.5 ft. lb					
33	(7) Vinyl acetate-9% (grade-Escorene LD-401, 3.4 HI at 190°C, 0.929 g/cc density)					

1						
2						
3						
						(1)
4	HDPE: 0.4 MI	100	80	70	60	-
5	0.1 MI	-	-	-	-	75
6	Polyisobutylene	-	20	30	40	-
7	Elastomeric Plasticizer	-	-	-	-	25
8						
9	<u>Average Gauge, mils</u>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.78
10	<u>Tensile Strength, psi</u>					
11	@ Yield MD	3800	2700	2100	1700	2500
12	TD	4200	2700	2100	1500	2550
13	@ Break MD	-	-	-	-	5100
14	TD	-	-	-	-	5100
15	<u>Elongation, %</u>					
16	@ Yield MD	10	15	15	20	20
17	@ TD	10	10	10	10	20
18	@ Break MD	-	-	-	-	760
19	TD	-	-	-	-	750
20	<u>IZ Secant Modulus, psi</u>					
21	MD	116,000	87,000	64,000	48,000	63,400
22	TD	148,000	91,000	68,000	50,000	68,200
23	<u>Elmendorf Tear, g/mil</u>					
24	MD	20	50	70	120	270
25	TD	40	200	350	7360	400
26	<u>Dart Drop Impact, F50, gm</u>					
27	1 1/2" dart, 26 inch drop	150	540	700	940	560

28 (1) HDPE/polyisobutylene films - Source of Data: "Exxon Elast-  
 29 omers for Polyolefin Modification". HDPE-0.4 melt index;  
 30 Polyisobutylene-grade, Vistanex® L-120

TABLE V		BLOWN SOFT HDPE FILM		(1)		High Mol. Wt. HDPE With Elastomeric Plasticizer	
		HDPE Controls		High Mol. Wt. HDPE		High Mol. Wt. HDPE	
		Med. Mol. Wt. HDPE	High Mol. Wt. HDPE	Med. Mol. Wt. HDPE	High Mol. Wt. HDPE	Med. Mol. Wt. HDPE	High Mol. Wt. HDPE
1		0.92	0.98				1.0
2							
3							
4							
5							
6	Average Gauge, mils						
7	Tensile Strength, psi						
8	@ Yield HD	3850	4650			3450	
9	TD	3600	3950			3350	
10	@ Break HD	8450	7300			8350	
11	TD	4700	6750			5800	
12	Elongation, %						
13	@ Yield HD	10	10			10	
14	TD	10	10			10	
15	@ Break HD	510	470			470	
16	TD	690	490			630	
17	1X Secant Modulus, psi						
18	HD	170,900	156,800			76,100	
19	TD	168,100	161,300			102,900	
20	Elmendorf Tear, g/mil						
21	HD	30	40			30	
22	TD	520	60			360	
23	@ Break HD						
24	TD						
25	Puncture Impact, in-lbs/mil						
26	HD	430	105			97	
27	TD	410	540			500	
28	@ Break HD	88	89			34	
29	TD	3	4			15	
30	@ Break HD						

(1) Med. Mol. Wt. ALATHION 7815 (MI= 0.4); High Mol. Wt. - HDSTALEN 92557 (MI= 0.1)

(2) P<sub>50</sub> Method 1 1/2" Dart, 26" drop



1	TABLE VI			
2	<u>Properties of</u>			
3	<u>POLYBUTYLENE BASED BLOWN FILMS</u>			
4	Polybutylene 8640, %	100	75	50
5	Elastomeric Plasticizer, %	-	25	50
6	Average Sample Gauge, mils	3.95	3.5	4.1
7	100% Modulus, psi MD	2955	2403	1696
8	TD	2333	1997	1504
9	300% Modulus, psi MD	5686	4496	3063
10	TD	4023	3634	2628
11	Modulus at 1% Extension, psi	382	171	142
12	Tensile Strength at Break, MD	6482	5573	4211
13	psi TD	5264	5232	3645
14	% Elongation at Break MD	355	415	490
15	TD	410	485	475
16	Elmendorf Tear Strength			
17	(ASTM D-1922), g/mil			(1)
18	MD	-	308	NT
19	TD	-	444	NT
20	<hr/>			
21	(1) No Tear			

TABLE VII

PROPERTIES OF MODIFIED  
(1)  
POLYPROPYLENE FILM (BLOWN)

5	<u>Average Gauge, mils</u>	1.0	3.8
6	<u>Tensile Strength, psi</u>		
7	@ Yield MD	2,712	2,318
8	TD	2,373	2,476
9	@ Break MD	6,780	5,545
10	TD	4,745	5,523
11	<u>Elongation, %</u>		
12	@ Yield MD	25	25
13	TD	25	25
14	@ Break MD	570	720
15	TD	505	665
16	<u>1% Secant Modulus, psi</u>		
17	MD	-	47,830
18	TD	-	40,910
19	<u>Elmendorf Tear, g/mil</u>		
20	MD	78	85
21	TD	192	76

(1) Polypropylene 60%, Elastomeric plasticizer 40%. Polypropylene grade: Escorene PP 5052, 1.2 MFR (Condition L);  
Elastomeric Plasticizer: 49% UE-645 (28% VA content, 1.2 MI), 28% VISTANEX L-80, 23% Primol 355, 0.2% Irganox 1076.

CLAIMS

1. A film-forming, thermoplastic elastomeric blend composition comprising:
  - (a) a polyolefin plastics component selected from polypropylene, polypropylene reactor copolymer, polybutylene, linear low density polyethylene, high density polyethylene, and mixtures thereof; and an elastomeric plasticizer comprising:
  - (b) polyethylene or a copolymer of ethylene and an unsaturated ester of a lower carboxylic acid,
  - (c) an olefinic elastomer, and
  - (d) a hydrocarbon oil.
2. A composition according to claim 1 characterised in that said olefinic elastomer is selected from ethylene copolymer elastomers, ethylene terpolymer elastomers, polyisobutylene, and isoprene copolymer elastomers including isobutylene-isoprene copolymer elastomers and halogenated isobutylene-isoprene copolymer elastomers.
3. A composition according to claim 2 characterised in that said olefinic elastomer comprises a copolymer of ethylene and propylene, or a terpolymer of ethylene, propylene and a non-conjugated diene.
4. A composition according to claim 1, 2 or 3 characterized in that component (b) is selected from high density polyethylene, low density polyethylene, linear low density polyethylene, vinyl esters and alkyl acrylates.
5. A composition according to claim 4 characterized in that component (b) is a vinyl ester comprising vinyl acetate or an alkyl acrylate selected from methyl acrylate and ethyl acrylate.

6. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims characterized in that said hydrocarbon oil is selected from paraffinic, naphthenic and aromatic oils.
7. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises from 15 to 95 weight percent of said component (a), based on the total composition.
8. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises from 2 to 60 weight percent of said component (b), based on the total composition.
9. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises from 1 to 50 weight percent olefinic elastomer, based on the total composition.
10. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises from 1 to 30 weight-percent hydrocarbon oil, based on the total composition.
11. A method of producing a film-forming thermoplastic elastomeric blend composition according to any one of the preceding claims which comprises providing the polyolefin plastics component (a) and a preformed elastomeric plasticizer comprising components (b), (c) and (d), and admixing the plasticizer with the plastics component to form the desired composition.
12. A method according to claim 11 wherein the preformed elastomeric plasticizer comprises from 20 to 70 weight percent of component (b) and/or from 20 to 80 weight percent of olefinic elastomer component (c) and/or from 1 to 35 weight percent of hydrocarbon oil component (d), based on the plasticizer.

13. A method according to claim 11 or 12 wherein the preformed elastomeric plasticizer additionally includes up to 30 weight percent of an olefinic plastic, based on the plasticizer.
14. A method according to claim 13 wherein the olefinic plastic is selected from polypropylene, high density polyethylene and polypropylene reactor copolymer.
15. a method according to any one of claims 11 to 14 characterized in that said elastomeric plasticizer and said component (a) are each provided in pellet form.
16. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 10 or produced according to the method of any one of claims 11 to 15 when in the form of a film.
17. A film when manufactured by producing a composition by the method of any one of claims 11 to 15 and performing a film forming step selected from cast extrusion, blown film tubular water bath extrusion, cast coextrusion, and extrusion coating.

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European Patent  
Office

# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application number

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			EP 83301625.6
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 3)
A	EP - A1 - 0 046 285 (MONTEDISON) * Claims *	1	C 08 L 23/02 C 08 J 5/18
A	EP - A1 - 0 041 937 (SEMPERIT) * Claims *	1	
A	EP - A2 - 0 032 804 (EXXON) * Claims *	1,17	
D,A	US - A - 4 132 698 (GESSLER) * Claims *	1	
D,A	US - A - 4 059 654 (V. BODUNGEN) * Claims *	1	
A	DE - A - 2 204 239 (REIFENHÄUSER) * Claims *	1,16,17	C 08 L 23/00 C 08 J C 08 K
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search VIENNA		Date of completion of the search 06-07-1983	Examiner TENGLER
<p><b>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons &amp; : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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